

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI, DERWOOD

Mass Intentions

December 4 - December 10

Monday, 12/4	9:00 a.m. Fr. Ivan Almodovar
Tuesday, 12/5	9:00 a.m. William English
Wednesday, 12/6	9:00 a.m. John Laffey 7:30 p.m. For Those Seeking Employment (L)
Thursday, 12/7	9:00 a.m. Paul Popernack, Sr.
Friday, 12/8	9:00 a.m. Robert F. Ruiz
Holy Day	12:00 p.m. <i>Pro populo</i> 7:30 p.m. Joan Boos
Saturday, 12/9	9:00 a.m. Fr. Donald Worch 5:00 p.m. Deceased Members of the Scrofani Family
Sunday, 12/10	8:00 a.m. <i>Pro populo</i> 9:30 a.m. Mrs. Challis 11:15 a.m. Grace Abbate 5:00 p.m. Walter Hardy

+ In Memoriam Aeternam +

In your charity, please pray for the repose of the soul of Rosaline Brice Byson, sister of Reverend Donald Brice, retired Archdiocese of Washington.

Please pray for the sick....Jackie Komlo, Maureen Hurley, Ed Dudenhoeffer, Bob Coyne, Evelyn Haddad, Carolyn Speaks, Bart Trickett, Katrina Schmidt, Bienvenido Delrosario, Jackie Roebuck King, Jeni Stepanek.. (Names will remain on this list for four consecutive weeks, but can be repeated by calling the Office.)

Readings for the Week of December 3, 2017

Sunday:	Is 63:16-17, 19b; 64:2-7/Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 [4]/1 Cor 1:3-9/Mk 13:33-37
Monday:	Is 2:1-5/Ps 122:1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9/ Mt 8:5-11
Tuesday:	Is 11:1-10/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17 [cf. 7]/ Lk 10:21-24
Wednesday:	Is 25:6-10a/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 [6cd]/ Mt 15:29-37
Thursday:	Is 26:1-6/Ps 118:1 and 8-9, 19-21, 25-27 [26a]/ Mt 7:21, 24-27
Friday:	Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38
Saturday:	Is 30:19-21, 23-26/Ps 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 / Mt 9:35-10:1, 5, 6-8
Next Sunday:	Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14 [8]/2

THE MUSINGS OF THE PASTOR

Three decades ago the parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi voted to participate in a Parish Twinning Program with the Conversion of St. Paul Parish in Leon, Haiti. We have certainly experienced the love of the Haitian people as we have undertaken various works of mercy for people in the parish. I want to call your attention to another matter regarding the people of Haiti. On November 20, 2017, the Department of Homeland Security announced termination of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haiti. TPS is a temporary, renewable, and humanitarian program authorized by statute that permits individuals to remain and work lawfully in the U.S. during a period in which it is deemed unsafe for nationals of that country to return home. There are an estimated 50,000 Haitian TPS recipients living in the U.S.

Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin, Texas, Chair of the USCCB Committee on Migration, issued the following statement in response to the termination of TPS for Haiti on November 21, 2017:

“Yesterday’s decision to terminate TPS for Haiti is deeply troubling. As discussed in our recent delegation trip report [‘Haiti’s Ongoing Road to Recovery: The Necessity of an Extension of Temporary Protected Status’], Haiti is not yet in a position where it can safely accept return of the estimated 50,000 Haitian nationals who have received TPS. This decision will devastate many families with TPS members, including those with U.S. citizen children. It will tear individuals from their loved ones, homes, careers, and communities. It will also have direct negative consequences for many in Haiti who rely on remittances for vital support.

Our nation has a responsibility to provide continued temporary protection until TPS holders’ return and reintegration can be safely accomplished. Catholic Social Teaching recognizes a duty to not to turn our backs on our neighbors in need. Scripture states: ‘If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him?’ (1 John 3:17). Our Haitian neighbors, at home and abroad, need our compassion, while their country rebuilds and recovers. Yesterday’s decision [on November 20, 2017] ignores such needs.

The administration has provided an 18-month period during which TPS recipients from Haiti can legally stay in the United States and prepare for their departure. While this time is appreciated, it will not remedy the protection concerns and family separation that Haitian TPS recipients will face.

Congress needs to find a legislative solution for long-term TPS recipients and enact legislation that keeps these families together.

Our prayers and continued support are with the Haitian people who have deep ties to our communities, parishes, and country. These are business owners, successful professionals, home owners, and parents of U.S. citizen children and most importantly, they are children of God.”

Continued in the column to the right.....

The First Sunday of Advent

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

As we begin the season of Advent, how am I preparing a place for Jesus in my life?

WELCOME to the Family of Christ!

The following individuals and their families recently joined our St. Francis faith community during the month of November:

Joel & Alma Minoza

The following children were baptized during the month of November:

Penelope Rose Cangas
Juliana Olivia Rose Flores
James Robert Tilghman

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY

Holy Day of Obligation

Mass Times

Friday, December 8

9:00 a.m. 12:00 Noon 7:30 p.m.

PARISH OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED

THANK YOU ST. FRANCIS FROM LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

The love and support that you gave the Little Sisters of the Poor was a sign of your genuine Charity. The collection amounted to \$5,031. Your gifts are truly a sign of God's loving and caring Providence, which will help us provide the best possible care for many elderly in need who come to make their home with us. Thank you all! Our Residents join with us in promising you our daily prayers for all your many intentions. God bless each and everyone of you! *The Little Sisters of the Poor & Residents of the Jeanne Jugan Residence*

THE MUSINGS OF THE PASTOR (continued)

I would encourage any parishioners who want to urge continued protection for Haitians while their country continues to recover to contact Justice for Immigrants. I think that is good for us to ask Congress to take leadership on this issue and consider the importance of TPS for families and for our communities. It is most appropriate that Congress work with immediacy to find a legislative solution to families with TPS members. If you want to take action now on behalf of Haitian TPS recipients and their families, the email address is jfi@uscce.org.

Until next week,
Fr. John Dillon

RCIA

The Rite of Acceptance and Welcoming will be celebrated at the 11:15 a.m. Mass next Sunday. This Rite is the first of the public rites celebrated in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). The inquirers will declare their intention to continue their journey of faith toward reception and full initiation into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. At this Rite, those who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil in April will become Catechumens and those who are already baptized and will be received into full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil will become Candidates. The St. Francis community, represented by the sponsors, will offer its support and witness to these inquirers as they continue their faith journey.

PREPARE FOR THE BIRTH OF CHRIST BY ATTENDING THE PARISH Penance SERVICE ON DECEMBER 11

St. Francis of Assisi Parish will sponsor a Parish Penance Service at 7:00 p.m. Monday, December 11, in the church. Come celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the Advent season and await the birth of Christ with a full heart and clear conscience. For more information, contact the parish office at (301) 840-1407.

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFT CARD PROGRAM STARTS DECEMBER 2/3

Are you still looking for the perfect Christmas gift for a family member, friend or colleague? If so, consider buying an Alternative Christmas Gift Card for goods or services that benefit beneficiaries of area charities. The gift cards are a great way to focus on the spirit of giving during Christmas, instead of the season's commercialization.

The gift cards will be sold after Masses in the Gathering Space on December 2/3 and December 16/17. For people who want to do more in-depth perusing, take home a copy of the Alternative Christmas Gift Catalog Form at the Social Concerns table and mail it to the Parish Office so that it arrives by Monday, December 18. For more information, contact Alternative Christmas Gift Program Ministry Coordinators, Pat O'Connor, leafs20879@gmail.com, or Doris Chung, dichung14@gmail.com.

December 3, 2017

LAMB OF GOD PRAYER MEETING Join the Lamb of God Prayer Group for worship and the study of Scripture on Tuesday, December 5, 7:30 p.m., St. Clare's Chapel in the Rectory. For details, please call Louise, (301) 977-5217.

POOR BOX DONATION – The donations for next week-end will go to the Shady Grove Pregnancy Center. *Thank you for your generosity.*

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PRAYER CHAIN If you have a prayer request, please contact Marianne Bullen, (301) 963-3420 or mariannebu@comcast.net with your requests.

ROSARY FOR PRIESTS

Every Wednesday evening at 6:45 p.m. we pray the rosary for our priests before the 7:30 p.m. Mass.

HOLY HOUR FOR THE DYING

On Thursday evenings in the St. Clare's Chapel in the Rectory, a prayer group meets at 7:00 p.m. to pray for the dying. This is a Holy Hour Devotion for the Dying. As a central work of our Catholic faith, we are called to pray for the dying, especially for those who may die suddenly, unprepared to face God. For additional information, please call the Parish Office, (301) 840-1407.

ROSARY CENACLE OF OUR LADY, QUEEN OF PEACE
Cenacle of Our Lady, Queen of Peace to pray for priests and vocations, 2:00 p.m. in the St. Clare's Chapel (Rectory) every Sunday. Please join us.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS - COUNCIL 2323

The Knights of Columbus are actively pursuing new members. Our council incorporates members from St. Francis, St. Mary's and St. Martin's. Though best known for our many charitable projects, we also have a lot of fun with dinners, fund raisers, family nights, and many other fraternal social occasions. If interested in learning more, please contact Gary Palmer, (301) 948-6494 or e-mail gtdbpalmer@verizon.net.



DECEMBER 2017 LUNCH – The St. Francis Lunch Bunch will meet on Wednesday, December 6 Noon at Red Hot & Blue, 16811 Crabbs Branch Way, Gaithersburg MD 20855. If are planning to attend, please contact Mary Lou Habib and she will save a seat for you, (301) 417-0243.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

Please stop by the St. Clare Room after Mass next weekend to have your blood pressure checked. (Saturday, 5:00 p.m., Sunday, 8:00, 9:30, 11:15 a.m. Masses)

SOME SOCKS

Thank you St. Francis! Over 500 pairs of socks were collected for SOME during "Socktober". Your generosity is greatly appreciated and overwhelming!

SPIRIT GIVING TREE GIFTS DUE BACK ON DECEMBER 10

Parishioners who chose a name off the Spirit Giving Tree in the Gathering Space should return their gifts wrapped and affixed with the gift tag that was attached to their ornament by Sunday, December 10.

Volunteers are also encouraged to help organize and process the gifts, once they are returned to the Gathering Space. For more information, contact Spirit Giving Tree Ministry Coordinator Bobbie McLaughlin at bobbienmcl@comcast.net.

SCHEDULE FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, CHRISTMAS EVE & CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

Since the Fourth Sunday of Advent falls on Christmas Eve this year, Catholic churches will be hard at work preparing to celebrate the final Sunday of Advent and the Christmas Vigil Masses on the same day. Here is the complete schedule of Masses--along with the type of music that will be performed --on December 24 and 25 at St. Francis of Assisi Church:

Fourth Sunday of Advent, Sunday, December 24:

5 p.m. Saturday: Cantor and Organ
8 a.m. Sunday: Cantor and Organ
9:30 a.m. Sunday: Trio
11:15 a.m.: Sunday: Contemporary Group

Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24:

4 p.m. Sunday: Children's Choir and Youth Band
6 p.m. Sunday: Family Band
8 p.m. Sunday: Women's Trio and Cello
10 p.m. Sunday: Christmas Carol Sing (*not a Mass*)
11 p.m. Sunday: Traditional Choir, String Quartet & Trumpet

Christmas, Monday, December 25:

8 a.m. Monday: Cantor, Organ, Cello & Trumpet
9:30 am. Monday: Women's Trio, Cello & Trumpet
11:15 a.m. Monday: Contemporary Group

ST. FRANCIS CHRISTMAS TREE SALE MOVES INTO ITS SECOND WEEK

The St. Francis Christmas Tree Sale just completed its first week of business, but buyers still have lots of options to find the perfect tree for their home. Choose from Fraser Firs ranging in size from 3' table tops to 10' trees. While you browse, check out the fresh, decorated Christmas wreaths and the 75' feet of white pine roping that can adorn a house cornice, fireplace mantle or stair bannister.

The hours of operations for the Christmas Tree Sale are from 3-9 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. The sale will continue through Sunday, December 17, or whenever the last tree is sold. Volunteer slots are still available for many shifts, with men, women and teenagers seeking Student Service Learning hours welcome to work.

For more information, contact Ministry Coordinator Brian Pettit at brianpettit@pettitcompanies.com

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS/EVENTS

CHRISTMAS STOCKING HELP LINE

Religious Education families are invited to participate in the *Christmas Stocking Help Line*, an Advent project to benefit children and families in need. Items needed will be listed on “stockings” hung in the Parish Center during RE class times beginning November 19. Families may choose to take one or more stockings, purchase the items listed, and return them to RE classes by December 12. Letters with more information about this project will be given to students in RE classes.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE FOR RE STUDENTS

The students in grades 3 - 8 will have the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation as part of their Religious Education classes in Advent. Catechists will review the Sacrament of Penance in advance, and we encourage parents to talk with their children about the Sacrament as well. Please note the date for your child's session and grade as shown below:

Sunday 9:20 Session:

Grade 5 - Sunday, Dec. 3
Grade 3 - Sunday, Dec. 10
Grade 4 - Sunday, Dec. 17

Monday 4:30 Session:

Grades 3, 4 and 5 - Mon., Dec. 4

Monday 6:45 Session:

Grades 6, 7 & 8 - Monday, Dec. 11
(participating in the Parish Penance Service starting at 7:00 pm)

Tuesday 6:45 Session:

Grades 6, 7 & 8 - Tuesday, Dec. 12

CATECHESIS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Our parish offers monthly catechetical sessions specifically designed for children and youth with special needs and their families. Our next session is on Sunday, December 10 from 3:30-4:30 pm in the St. Clare Room. If you would like to learn more about these sessions, or if you are interested in serving as a catechist or aide for children with special needs, please call Susan Anderson, Director of Religious Education, at 301-258-9193.

CATECHISTS AND AIDES NEEDED

Additional volunteers are still needed in our Sunday morning and Monday evening middle school program. Please consider whether you can serve as a catechist or classroom aide for our children and young people. We need your help to keep our class sizes small. If you would like to learn more about this important ministry, please contact Susan Anderson, Director of Religious Education, at 301-258-9193.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SNOW CANCELLATION POLICY

If Montgomery County Public Schools are closed, and if schools are dismissed early, Religious Education classes, including FRED, are also cancelled. This applies to Sunday classes as well if Montgomery County Public Schools announces cancellation of weekend school activities. Cancellation announcements will be recorded on the Religious Education Office phone (301-258-9193) and posted on the St. Francis Parish Facebook page (“St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church”) and website. Whenever in doubt, please use your own judgment about local weather and driving conditions, and err on the side of safety when making decisions about bringing your child to class.

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS/EVENTS

ST. FRANCIS YOUTH MINISTRY *Upcoming Events*

FRED

DECEMBER

- 3 FRED-Preparing Ourselves (2 Peter 3:1-13)
- 10 FRED Movie Night
- 15 Christmas Caroling - earn SSL/Confirmation hours (Open to FRED & FRED Jr.)
- 17 FRED Christmas Party

No FRED On December 24th or 31st!
Merry Christmas!

GET SOCIAL

Follow us on Instagram & Twitter @ SFAFRED.

COLLECTION FOR RETIRED RELIGIOUS

The annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be held this year on the weekend of December 9/10 in the Archdiocese of Washington. This parish-based appeal coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) benefits nearly 33,000 senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests whose communities lack retirement savings. Thank you for your generosity!

2017 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

To receive credit in 2017, your contributions must be dated December 31, 2017. If you are mailing a contribution, it must be received in the parish Office on or before Wednesday, January 3, 2018. As a reminder, the parish statement of contributions will not include your FAITHDIRECT contributions. You will receive a statement directly from FAITHDIRECT.

FAITH DIRECT

With the busy Holiday Season, enrolling in *Faith Direct* is a great way to take one item off your weekly to-do list. Pick up an enrollment form from the parish office today or enroll online at www.FaithDirect.net, our church code is **MD110**. Already using *Faith Direct*? Don't forget to add your Christmas or End of Year contributions to your account. Thank you in advance for your support and for using *Faith Direct*!

YOUTH BLING SALE

Our FRED teens will be sponsoring a “*Bling*” Sale this weekend and next weekend, December 9/10. Catholic Jewelry and Rosaries will be available for you to purchase for Christmas gifts. Everything is priced reasonably for you while supporting our Youth Group. Proceeds go to support the 2018 Summer Service Work Camps.

THE HOLIDAY BAZAAR

The Bazaar has been a tradition at St Francis now for over twenty five years. This year *Millie's Bake Shop* was a hit with all of the kids. Mary Francis and her many friends made sure the wheel kept spinning. Shabby Chic, as always, had wonderful gifts and treasures for everyone. Thanks to the Beall family, who always do a great job with Shabby Chic. Karen Mason always has so many interesting religious items for everyone to choose from. The Silent Auction, headed up by Debi Dicello, had many wonderful baskets and items to bid on.

There were many beautiful handmade crafts and ornaments made by several of the parishioners. The crafters who gave of their time and talents were Jane Tom, Geri Prelewicz, Sara Becker, Doris Chung, Margaret Talcott and Mary O'Sullivan. The Jewelry Boutique was a big hit. Linda Call and her helpers always do a great job. The raffle, spearheaded by Linda Foster, was a great success. The Flea Market was also a great success. Pat Badolato and her helpers did a great job converting the rectory into a buyer's haven. Marie Purdy did a great job organizing and overseeing the 24 outside vendors that participated in the Bazaar. Nadine Edwards headed up the Café Assisi with its many appetizing treats. Coffee and donuts were a great treat - thanks to Sylvia Jones, it kept everybody warm and awake during the day. There was even a visit by Santa Claus (aka Fr. John). There were several other people who stepped up and volunteered to help out. They were there to help set up, volunteer during the Bazaar and help clean up afterwards. I would like to thank everybody who helped. It takes many people to run the Bazaar, without volunteers there would be no Holiday Bazaar. Thank you also to all of the parishioners who came out and supported the Bazaar. This is a major fundraiser for the parish - \$18,000 when all is said and done!

God Bless & Thank You!
Anne Culver

WALK WITH MARY:

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CELEBRATION

The Archdiocese of Washington's annual Walk with Mary procession and Mass to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, will take place on Saturday, December 9. The procession will leave promptly at 12:00 Noon from the Shrine of the Sacred Heart (6th St. & Park Rd., NW) and will conclude at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception (4th St. & Michigan Ave., NE). The Mass will be held at the National Shrine at 2:30 p.m. with Cardinal Donald Wuerl as the main celebrant and Bishop Mario Dorsonville as the homilist. For more information, visit adw.org/wwm or search on social media using #WalkwithMary.

THANKSGIVING DAY COLLECTION

Thank you to those who donated to our Thanksgiving Day Collection for Gaithersburg Help. A check will be sent from our parish for \$457 to be donated in Fr. Ralph's memory.

ARE YOU AFFECTED

BY SOMEONE ELSE'S ADDICTION?

NAR-ANON offers hope. Nar-Anon Family Groups are a worldwide fellowship for those affected by someone else's addiction. As a twelve step program, we offer help by sharing our experience, strength, and hope. A meeting is held on Wednesday evenings 7:00 p.m., 15886B. Gaither Drive, Gaithersburg. For additional information contact Alison, (301) 963-6640 or visit the website nar-anon.org.

FRANCISCAN MONASTERY DECEMBER EVENTS

Nativities of the World, a collection of more than 150 mostly handcrafted crèches from around the globe, will be on exhibit at the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land from December 2, 2017-January 7, 2018 (daily 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.). Many are folk art, created of local materials, such as nuts, tin foil, straw, and felt. See the universality of the Catholic faith through the way different cultures express the birth of Christ.

Luminaria at the Franciscan Monastery

Dedicate a luminaria in honor of your loved ones this Christmas. More than 1,000 luminarias, each marked with a personal dedication, will line the outdoor Rosary Portico of the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land (1400 Quincy St., NE) from Christmas Eve to New Year's Eve as part of Seven Nights of Lights. Join the blessing and lighting on December 24 at 1:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild. December 13 is the deadline for luminaria orders. For information and placing orders, please visit fmgg.org or call 202-244-

The Monastery is at 1400 Quincy St. NE, Washington, DC 20017. Free parking; near Brookland-CUA Metro/H6 bus toward Ft. Lincoln. Information: myfranciscan.org and 202-526-6800.

TRINITY DOME DEDICATION

All are invited to attend the historic dedication of the Trinity Dome at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception during the 12:00 Noon Mass on Friday, December 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. The dedication will mark the completion of the work of the National Shrine begun in 1920 and will launch preparation for the 100th Anniversary of the laying of its foundation stone in 2020. No tickets or reservations are required. The Basilica is located at 400 Michigan Ave., NE, offers ample free parking, and is walking distance from the Brookland-CUA Station on Metro's Red Line. For more information please visit www.nationalshrine.org or call 202-526-8300.

NATIONAL SHRINE'S CHRISTMAS DINNER FOR THOSE IN NEED

The Basilica of the National Shrine will sponsor dinner for those who are alone or in need on Christmas Day, December 25. Volunteers are needed to assist in preparing, serving, and delivering meals as well as assisting with other logistics. Those interested in volunteering can sign-up online at www.nationalshrine.org/christmasdinner or by calling the Basilica at 202-526-8300.

GIVE THE GIFT OF SERVICE

Catholic Charities DC encourages you to give back this holiday season by taking advantage of a variety of volunteer opportunities available in Washington, DC and southern Maryland. For more information on volunteering with Catholic Charities, or to register to volunteer, visit catholiccharitiesdc.org/volunteer.